



CAPELETTA

No 18, August 2001

Chairman's Notes

It is a great honour for me to put my name to the end of this piece, even though how it came to be is still something of a mystery!

A vote of thanks is due to our out-going chairman, Christine Wallace, from the choir in general and me in particular for handing over the choir in such good heart. Assuming the position of chairman of a choir which has largely solved the difficulties of the past few years gives me the opportunity to concentrate on the future. Thank you, Christine.

In sharing my thoughts for the future with you in this edition of the Capeletta I have probably taken space that would usually have been filled far more entertainingly by Ian Moir whose articles are always a joy to read. Thank you, Ian for your forbearance.

I would also like to thank the choir, our accompanist Anthea Smallwood, and our conductor, Carl Russell, for the wonderful summer concert given in the Memorial Hall on June 30th. It gave me a particular pleasure to see the first concert under my stewardship beautifully sung to a full hall. There is such a positive mood in the choir now and the level of communication between choir and conductor is so strong, that the most challenging piece - Britten's Hymn to St Cecilia – was the hit of the show. From the first few rehearsals the choir had become excited by the piece and carried it off with vitality and musicality. It was wonderful to be part of it. Thank you choir, thank you Anthea and thank you Carl. The evening was rounded off by a magnificent meal prepared by Liz Weavin and her team of helpers. There were over a hundred mouths to feed and I heard of nobody who went away hungry! Thank you, Liz!

I never stop talking to people about the pleasures of singing in a choir, especially our choir. It is bearing fruit and I expect to see at least two new members in September from my conversations. A third was terribly keen until he came to the summer concert and thought we were too good for a muggins like him! I'm still working on him. We do need new members. We can get them. Don't be shy – be evangelical. If you enjoy what you do then flaunt your enjoyment. If potential singers are concerned that they lack experience or musical education please assure them that the reason that choirs like ours exist is to open up this wonderful experience to anybody who can hit a note and carry a tune. Carl will do the rest! (Thanks, Carl).

So, triumphant at the LHMF; on top form in the summer concert; where do we go from here? And I mean, where do we willingly, cheerfully and enthusiastically go from here?

Carl has given us some of his ideas on where he would like to take us. From his ideas one or two of my own have developed. But we are a small village choir composed of amateurs, many of us untrained. Most of us are parents, even grandparents. Many of us have full-time jobs. We all have other responsibilities and demands on our time. How much more can we give? How much more do we want to give?

Carl has also told me of some of the music he would like to include in future concerts. We have a healthy disagreement over one or two pieces but I hope that we can give you a clear programme come September. We would like to do more; we would like to make more demands on your time, not forever but at least over the next couple of years.

You will find my ideas for the development of Capel Choral Society elsewhere in this edition of Capeletta. For the time being then, here's to the 2001/02 LHMF Season, and may the Choir go from strength to strength!

Peter Relf

Dates for 2001/2002

| | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| September 10 th | First practice of Season |
| October 12 th at 8pm | Leith Hill AGM, Christian Centre |
| December 15 th | Capel Christmas Concert |
| December 17 th | Capel Christmas Dinner |
| January 7 th | First practice of 2002 |
| Saturday January 19 th | Division I Combined Rehearsal |
| Sunday March 10 th | St Matthew Passion |
| Saturday March 23 rd | Division I Combined Rehearsal |
| Saturday March 26 th | Pre-Festival concert |
| Saturday April 6 th | Division I Combined Rehearsal |
| Thursday 11 th April 2002 | Division I Festival Day |
| (Easter Monday is 31 st March) | |

Notable Websites

In case you had not yet heard, Capel Choral now has its own Website which tells the world how wonderful we are; its address is; www.capelchoir.ic24.net

For devotees of the great composer and LHMF founding Conductor, the Ralph Vaughan Williams Society also has its own website (by the time you read this there may be a link to it from our Site): www.rvwsociety.com. This in turn has a link to a site devoted entirely to RVW himself, with bibliography, pictures, anecdotes etc.

The BBC Music Magazine (which I read occasionally) now has a list of musical sites; one which caught my eye recently was: www.andante.com This seems to have everything you need to know about the world of classical music – Concerts, Festivals, Groves Dictionary, etc.

Music for 2001/2002

| | | |
|--------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| Full Chorus | Nelson Mass(Missa in angustiis) | Josef Haydn |
| | Requiem | Maurice Duruflé |
| Madrigal | On the plains, fairy trains | Thomas Weelkes |
| Part Song | John Dory | Ralph Vaughan Williams |
| Men's Song | A tall story | Arthur Benjamin |
| Women's Song | The heavenly aeroplane | John Rutter |
| Ensemble | The Lord's prayer | Maurice Duruflé |

Capel Choral has sung the Duruflé *Requiem* at the Festival in 1988 –we scored 90 and won overall, and we won the Men's Song *Tall Story* in 1993, again with 90, so these pieces at least should be familiar to some choir members.

If you should have copies of the music for one or more of the works, please would you let the Music Librarian know – it will reduce the hire charges a bit!

Capel Choral Society Committee

For the benefit of new members, and some not so new, the Choir Committee now consists of:

| | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Chairman: | Peter Relf | Soprano Representative: | Yvonne Allmond |
| Secretary: | Jackie Coke | Alto Representative: | Sally Calvert |
| Treasurer: | Liz Weavin | Tenor Representative: | Dave Pavey |
| Conductor: | Carl Russell | Bass Representative: | Ben Ashwood |
| Accompanist: | Anthea Smallwood | Press and Publicity: | Ian Moir |
| Music Librarian: | Gill Moir | | |

If you need any help, or have any matters to raise, speak to your Voice Rep

Centenary Matters

It's really something to have a hundredth birthday coming up. Just look at the changes over the last 100 years. The personal computer, the world wide web, the jet engine, penicillin, bungee jumping – all undreamt of 100 years ago. The British Empire, Cunard, BSA, Lyons Corner Houses – where are they now? But Capel Choral Society goes on much as before (yes, I know, some of the members are new). It's a significant achievement in village life, something in which we should take pride and make our successors proud of. The foundation of the choir predates the LHMF by two years. In essence, the LHMF owes its foundation to the pre-existence of village choirs like Capel.

I think there is no doubt that the LHMF has been paramount in maintaining the interest in choral singing that permeates the villages and towns of the area. I have yet to hear any member of the choir express a wish that the choir should follow the course taken by some other choirs and quit the LHMF. So let's put everyone's mind at rest and take loyalty to the LHMF in this discussion as unassailable. However perhaps we may be forgiven for taking the parochial view that our centennial should take some priority in our programme over the next two years. Working on that basis I have either embarked on or propose the following:

1. We join the National Federation of Music Societies (NFMS). There are a number of benefits including insurance protecting members against public liability, abandonment of concerts and other risks. There are a performing rights scheme, 3,000 programme notes, 50 Information sheets and "How To" guides, Legal and Financial advice etc. The NFMS also works closely with grant-giving bodies! The annual subscription is £78, plus £19 for the insurance, for a society with 51-75 members. I have already secured provisional membership pending our submission of
2. A Constitution. To make application for any grants we are required to have a constitution. The NFMS has given us a model constitution which I have adapted to our own identity. This will be discussed at a committee meeting on 3rd September. From any comments issuing from that meeting a final document will be drawn up to be submitted to the membership at an EGM which I should like to take place prior to the first rehearsal on Monday 10th September. As soon as the constitution is ratified we shall make formal application to have our membership of the NFMS confirmed. The NFMS is a Registered Charity and there would be significant advantages to our becoming one too. The constitution would also aid us in our application to become a
3. Registered Charity. Apart from tax concessions on subscriptions the primary benefit of becoming a charity is to strengthen our case for grants. Liz has supplied me with the application forms and these are straightforward. According to the NFMS any society like our is already regarded as a charitable institution. Registering just completes a legal process. We should like to apply for grants to aid our centennial programme which, at Carl's suggestion, will include a
4. Commissioned Work. Once Carl had put this idea in my mind I could think of nothing else for some days and came up with an idea which I called originally the Mole Valley Cantata. After more thought I felt it should be the Mole Valley Suite constructed on the following lines:
 - a. Capel is too small a subject but Mole Valley has made a surprising contribution to world history. There are a number of other choirs in the area that could lend strength to the venture if they wish. The work would consist of a number of subjects, some of which – based on naïve melodies – could be sung with piano accompaniment in local schools by children as individual songs. So, for example, a theme particular to the Scott-Broadwood school could be sung regularly as part of musical education and local history.
 - b. The text has been submitted to a number of composers, three of whom are keen to do it. I will approach more before arriving at a short list which will then be discussed with Carl. We can make no further progress, however, until we secure funds. This could be a sizeable work and recognised composers charge over £100 per completed minute of music!
 - c. I envisage the first performance taking place in Capel, perhaps in the Flower Show Marquee. I would like to approach the Yehudi Menuhin School near Leatherhead to use their new auditorium for the first full performance or, failing that Dorking Halls, at Christmas. The involvement of children could make this a piece that is performed every five years as a full piece as each generation passes through their schools. That's the plan, based I think on a sound musical concept but also designed to attract significant funding. Perhaps this music might also feature on the

5. CD. It's my opinion that any of the Leith Hill choirs is capable of turning out memorable performances which have value as recordings. Capel, however, seem to have achieved a wonderful balance just now with great purity when we sing well. When singing a part, though, we are not necessarily conscious of the beauty of the whole as experienced by our conductor or the audience. In any case, as we move too far away, grow too old (or too disgraceful) to continue singing we have only the aural remembrance of our finest music. Carl and I would love to record some of our best work on a CD for sale as keepsakes but also as fund raisers at flowers shows and concerts etc. This will need some extra dedication on the part of the singers and it may be necessary to ask for volunteers to make up the lead constituents for the project. This is a subject for more thorough discussion concerning repertoire, rehearsal time and – not least- recording arrangements. I would like to aim for Flower Show 2002 as the launch date.

Over the next few years we can give ourselves the opportunity to reach a standard of singing that transcends anything we might have thought possible. I have heard people say, "but we're just a small village choir." Let's rephrase that to read "we are a magnificent choir from a small village." Are we going to be magnificent in 2003?

Peter Relf

Full Chorus Music for 2001/2002

Maurice Duruflé was very much of the 20th Century, being born in 1902 and living until 1986, but stylistically he is probably more of the 18th Century. He began his musical education at the cathedral school in Rouen and continued after 1919 in Paris, where he studied organ with Tournemire and Vierne. As a result he was employed as an assistant in their churches, Saint Clotilde and Notre Dame respectively. He was an exceptionally gifted student – his principal teacher of composition was Paul Dukas; Duruflé was the sorcerer's foremost apprentice.

In 1930 became organist in his own right at Saint-Etienne-du-Mont where he stayed for the rest of his life. In 1944 he also became a professor of harmony at the Paris Conservatoire which he held until his retirement in 1969. He composed throughout his career, but from the early 1920's until the late 1960's he produced no more than a dozen works. Of these his choral output numbered just three works.

The *Requiem, Op9*, was first performed in 1947 and it has remained his most frequently-heard composition. It comprises nine movements, and, in the manner of Fauré, places greater emphasis on the hope of reconciliation than on the normal domesday trombones of the Requiem Mass. The *Dies Irae* movement, traditionally the centre-piece of a Requiem, is omitted. Overall, while the work certainly does not lack contrasts and dramatic passages, it avoids theatrical effects to be found in, for example, Berlioz' *Requiem*.

During a period from 1790 Haydn retained the title of Capelmeister to the court of Prince Esterházy and his salary, although the current Prince had disbanded the orchestra and his services were not needed, and visited England three times where he received an honorary degree at Oxford and a commission for six symphonies.

The accession of a new Esterházy prince in 1796 led to a rekindling of interest in music and the return of Haydn to duties under the family's patronage. This period produced some of his greatest works, including *The Creation*, *The Seasons* as well as the three great late Masses, the *Missa in tempore belli*, the so-called *Nelson Mass* and the *Harmoniemesse*.

The *Nelson Mass* (more accurately the *Missa in angustiiis*) is a particularly dramatic and emotional work. The Mass was composed between 10th July and 31st August 1798, and was probably intended for the name day of Princess Esterházy. The connection with Nelson is derived from the fact that it was first performed shortly after the news of the defeat of Napoleon's fleet at Aboukir Bay had reached Vienna.

Practice Tapes

Anthea Smallwood will once again be putting in a lot of hard work to produce tape recordings of the voice parts of the main Festival pieces. Choir members are strongly urged to make her efforts worthwhile by obtaining copies of these tapes for practice purposes. Private rehearsal is a key to magnificence! Please support Anthea's dedication to the choir and give her a C90 tape cassette.

LHMF 2001 Adjudications

| Class | Piece | Mark | Place |
|---|--|---------|-------|
| Madrigal | <i>'May', 'Now is the month of Maying'</i> | 89 | 1 |
| Adjudication | | | |
| <p>Britten: Purposeful, well articulated performance. Generally good pitch and the ensemble was convincing.</p> <p>Morley: Excellent tone range and good projection. Final consonants good; middle parts not always clear in piano, but in forte the balance was fine.</p> | | | |
| Class | Piece | Mark | Place |
| Own Choice | <i>'If ye love me'</i> | 86 | 2 |
| Adjudication | | | |
| <p>The opening was still and gentle with good legato but with words still emerging clearly. Although this is quiet, slow singing it still needs lots of energy – ensure that phrases do not sag in the middle. Ensemble was generally very good with only the occasional moment of untidiness. Communication between choir and conductor was again excellent meaning we were drawn into your performance.</p> | | | |
| Class | Piece | Mark | Place |
| Men's song | <i>'Bushes and Briars'</i> | 90 | 1 |
| Adjudication | | | |
| <p>A very lyrical performance with a true legato line achieved and the sostenuto of the music clearly understood. Tone and blend were excellent throughout and the 'pp' achieved on the top of page 2 was <u>lovely</u>. Intonation was secure – upper voices keep working on opening plenty of upper space to keep the tone as free as possible. Very occasionally words were a little lost in the legato but this was musical and shapely singing.</p> | | | |
| Class | Piece | Mark | Place |
| Ensemble | <i>'As torrents in summer'</i> | 87 & 84 | |
| Adjudication | | | |
| <p>Entry 5: Shapely and with an attractive tonal range. Blend not always convincing (tenors too loud on occasion and basses not clean enough at the end), but it was communicative and enjoyable.</p> <p>Entry 6: Bright toned and creditably sustained pitch. Ensemble not always unanimous and a tendency to push forward on the pulse gave one or two uneasy moments, but the end was well controlled and atmospheric.</p> | | | |
| Class | Piece | Mark | Place |
| Part Song | <i>'Musical Risotto'</i> | 88 | 2 |
| Adjudication | | | |
| <p>A very impressive 'p' start – just keep the tone absolutely supported to maintain brightness of tuning. Tempi changes in the opening section were always under control with good focus on the conductor from the choir. 'Pizzicato' was very crisp and light – exactly right – and very supportive of the Soprano line. Blend between sopranos needs to ensure no voices dominate. A lovely solo – well acted, and with great control in the 'p' work. Ensemble was good at the opening of the triumphant section – just make sure it is maintained as the music quickens. Some very poised singing.</p> | | | |

| Class | Piece | Mark | Place |
|---|---|------|-------|
| Women's Song | <i>'Under the greenwood tree'</i> | 87 | 3 |
| Adjudication | | | |
| Very tidy rhythms and purposeful spirit. Pitch good – the semitones held no terrors for you! – balance a little too top dominated. The dynamics were varied but 'mp' was too quiet – and long 'dim' from bar 33 needed to start louder to give room for <u>three</u> echoes. | | | |
| Class | Piece | Mark | Place |
| Full Chorus | <i>'Magnificat' and 'Come ye sons of Art'</i> | 88 | 2 |
| Adjudication | | | |
| Bach: A well controlled opening with clearly defined vocal entries. Just ensure here that balance is absolutely correct – the alto and 2 nd sop entries were a little overshadowed by lower voices. Tone was lovely and bright though sometimes longer held notes dipped a little in intonation. The contrapuntal texture of 'Gloria Patri' was always understood and communicated though in the opening section there were moments where ensemble rocked slightly. The dynamic shaping and phrasing of the 'Sicut Erat' section was lovely. (86 marks) Purcell: This was well sung with real energy and the joy of the music was most effectively captured. The choir worked as a team and dynamic colour was lovely, Good focus on the conductor here. (90 marks) | | | |

The Adjudicators were Louise Horrocks and Hilary Davan Wetton.

The Aggregate Marks were:

| | |
|-------------|-----|
| Capel | 442 |
| Oxshott | 441 |
| Bookham | 440 |
| Leatherhead | 431 |

It was a close-run thing, but small is beautiful. Didn't we do well!

LHMF General Committee Meeting 22nd May

The Festival marking system was discussed. The Chairman thought the Festival had been marred by people not realising that the new system had been discussed and agreed, and was a one-year trial only (I certainly don't remember it being raised at last year's LHMF AGM. Ed.) After much discussion a vote was taken on whether we should return to the previous system, and this was passed with fourteen votes in favour, with five abstentions. All marks will be announced next year therefore, but comments will be restricted.

In answer to a question it was stated that the adjudicators are give guidance on marking, but they don't always take note.

Three of the four 2001 LHMF concerts were sell-outs, with 81% sales on 20th April, and the box office takings were £2000 up on last year. Oxshott topped the ticket sales chart, with Mickleham second and Bookham third.

The Committee agreed that Holmbury St Mary should move to Division I, and Leatherhead would move to Division II to compensate.

The Chairman stated that the Music Committee welcomed suggestions for festival music.
